

VZCZCXRO9045  
RR RUEHMA RUEHPA  
DE RUEHPC #0117 1040946  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 140946Z APR 09  
FM AMEMBASSY LOME  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9068  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0874

UNCLAS LOME 000117

PARIS FOR BOB KANEDA  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [TO](#)  
SUBJECT: TOGO: ACOTA TEAM VISITS POST

11. SUMMARY: From March 10-14, 2009, an evaluation team from the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program visited Lome to assess Togo's qualifications and readiness as a Peace Support Operations (PSO) Troop Contributing Country (TCC) to become a partner in the ACOTA peacekeeper training program. The team consisted of ACOTA Coordinator Chip Beck and Regional Training Operations Manager Lars Hudnall. They met with Togolese Army Chief of Staff, General Zakari Nandja and his military and division chiefs, as well as Foreign Minister Koffi Esaw. The team concluded that Togo qualified as a candidate country for the ACOTA Program and will recommend Togo's acceptance as ACOTA's 23rd partner country.  
END SUMMARY.

12. OBJECTIVES: The visit had two purposes. The first was to explain to Togolese authorities what the ACOTA program can offer Togo in training and equipment for their peacekeeper training facilities and for the Togolese units deploying to Chad and the Central African Republic (MINUCAT II) and UN Operations in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI). A second objective was to evaluate the level and status of Togo's current training programs, plans, capabilities, resources and future requirements with regard to PSO's.

13. ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF MEETINGS: On March 11, the ACOTA team and Embassy Military Affairs Officer met with Togolese Army Chief of staff, General Nandja; Deputy Chief of Staff; and Division heads (Army, Navy, Gendarmes) for an exchange of information. The ACOTA team explained the purpose and scope of the program. The Togolese covered their PSO plans and intentions, which included the deployment of an infantry company to MINURCAT II on March 15, followed by a replacement company in 6 months. (Note: These troops have been deployed since this visit.) These meetings confirmed Togo's desire to join the ACOTA training program, and verified that Togo is supporting international PSO's.

14. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS: The ACOTA team and Embassy Officer also met with Foreign Minister Kofi Essaw, who provided his own vision and assurances of Togo's active engagement in PSO's and African conflict transformation.

15. TOGO'S NEW PEACEKEEPING TRAINING CENTER: With the support of the French, Togo has recently built a modest but attractive center for PSO training on the outskirts of Lome. It can easily accommodate training for 200 peacekeepers but has sufficient terrain to accommodate 600-800 trainees once additional facilities are added. The training center is equipped with several excellent training components that ACOTA often builds from scratch. These included a mock-combat operational command post; checkpoints; mine-clearing terrain; urban operational facilities; and a convoy/field operations area. The Commanding Officer, LTC Katanga Nakoura, is a 2007 graduate of the ACOTA ECOWAS logistical Training Course at the Kofi Annan Center and is enthusiastic about the full slate of ACOTA training.

16. CONCLUSION: The ACOTA team evaluated Togo as meeting the basic criteria for ACOTA Program participation and partnership and will recommend that Togo be accepted as a partner. Since Togo already has 300 peacekeepers in UNOCI, and the first contingent of MINURCAT II (200 peacekeepers) are already in Chad, it is clear that Togo is committed and already active in conflict transformation in Africa.

If Togo is approved as an ACOTA partner, the ACOTA Program Office will propose that it move forward to be in position to work with the French and be ready to provide tailored PSO training to the second contingent of peacekeepers that Togo is planning to send to MINURCAT II later in 2009. ACOTA will work with the Togolese at a proposed Training Strategy Conference (TSC) in May to develop additional training calendars for subsequent MINURCAT II contingents as well as those for UNOCI. Development of the training center and the instructor cadre will also be a priority for the ACOTA program.

17. COMMENT: The Embassy concurs with the ACOTA team's assessment and strongly recommends that the ACOTA Program Development Oversight Committee accept Togo as ACOTA's 23rd partner country. Togo's partnership with ACOTA supports the Embassy's MSP goals of promoting democracy and good governance by helping to professionalize the Togolese military. We feel it is vital to encourage the Togolese military to participate in regional peacekeeping operations. The Embassy looks forward to coordinating ACOTA's proposed May TSC and all subsequent engagements with the Togolese military. END COMMENT.

HAWKINS